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Facing Futures Literacy

Debates on media literacy and various literacies as well as corresponding literacy practices have been playing a significant role in many countries for decades. But only recently, the discourse about futures literacy and related practices have entered the scene. On the one hand, pedagogical relevance formulas have always included a future-oriented component. In this sense, there is a long history of futures of education including implicit or explicit contracts of generations, emancipatory future workshops, and all sorts of futuristic ed-tech promises. On the other hand, recent concepts and practices of futures literacy are often dealing with global challenges such as educational (in)justice, education for sustainable development or educational accountability. However, there are ambivalences and paradoxes to be questioned. In what sense is futures literacy a forward-looking concept or rather an example of educational politics of unsustainability? How can it contribute to profound educational innovation in cultures of digitality rather than proving to be another example of the literacification of everything? The presentation starts (1) with an outline of the concept of futures literacy and examples of related literacy practices, followed (2) by a critical discussion of some conceptual issues. In part (3), the concept of futures literacy is questioned in the wider context of the future of literacies. Finally (4), the contribution aims at rethinking the topic beyond literacies.

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